

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-15. (Cancelled)

16. (new) A method for producing a charge image on an intermediate carrier of an electrophotographic printer or copier, comprising the
5 steps of:

providing a character generator having a plurality of light sources arranged in at least one row in groups;

providing a separate functional unit for each light source group for control of the light sources;

10 connecting the functional unit with a central control, unit the functional unit comprising an address decoder, an address via which it can be specifically activated, and a control unit;

controlling the light sources of each group by said control unit assigned to the respective functional unit;

15 imaging the at least one row of light sources onto the intermediate carrier as an exposure line, the intermediate carrier being displaced substantially transverse to the exposure line relative to the character generator; and

20 selecting a temporal beginning of illumination phases of groups of light sources such that deviations of the exposure line from a target line are minimized.

17. (new) A method according to claim 16 in which the control units of the functional units control the light source groups independently of a clock pulse that is predetermined by a line period provided for processing of a
25 printed page.

18. (new) A method according to claim 16 in which the control unit of each functional unit is controlled by the central control unit in order to initiate the illumination phase of the associated light source group.

19. (new) A method according to claim 18 in which the central control unit gives the control unit of each functional unit an individual start command for controlling the associated light source group, a time of the start command being selected such that a deviation of the exposure line segment
5 corresponding to the light source group from the target line is minimized.

20. (new) A method according to claim 16 in which the functional units are arranged operatively in a row, and receive at least one of the elements selected from the group consisting of data and a clock signal via an input interface, and, except for a last functional unit in the row, forward these
10 data or the signal to the next functional unit in the row via an output interface.

21. (new) A method according to claim 20 in which between the reception and the forwarding of the data or of the clock signal there is situated a system clock in which the clock signal is reproduced.

22. (new) A method according to claim 16 in which data are stored
15 in a volatile memory that is separately assigned to the functional unit.

23. (new) A method according to claim 22 in which the data comprise print data for the segments, corresponding to the light source group, of a plurality of lines to be printed.

24. (new) A method according to claim 22 in which the data
20 comprises a correction parameter for each light source of the group that represents its individual illumination intensity.

25. (new) A device for producing a charge image on an intermediate carrier of an electrophotographic printer or copier, comprising:

a character generator that has a plurality of light sources arranged in at
25 least one row in groups;

a separate functional unit for each light source group for controlling of the light sources;

the functional unit is connected with a central control unit, the functional unit comprising an address decoder, an address via which it can be specifically activated, and a control unit;

5 the light sources of each group being controlled by said control unit assigned to the respective functional unit;

the at least one light source row is imaged as an exposure line onto the intermediate carrier, and the intermediate carrier is displaced substantially transverse to the exposure line relative to the character generator; and

10 a temporal beginning of the illumination phases of groups of light sources is selectable such that deviations of the exposure line from a target line are minimized.

26. (new) A device according to claim 25 in which the light source groups are each controllable by the control unit of the associated functional unit independently of a clock pulse that is predetermined by a line period
15 provided for processing of a print line.

27. (new) A device according to claim 25 in which the control unit of each functional unit is controlled by the central control unit in order to initiate the illumination phase of the associated light source group.

20 28. (new) A device according to claim 27 in which the central control unit is programmed in such a way that it gives the control unit of each functional unit an individual start command for controlling the associated light source group, a time of the start command being selected such that a deviation of the exposure line segment corresponding to the light source group from the target line is minimized.

25 29. (new) A device according to claim 25 in which the functional units are arranged operatively in a row, the functional units having an input interface for receiving one of the elements selected from the group consisting of data and a clock signal, and the functional units, with the exception of a last

functional unit in the row, having an output interface for forwarding the data or the clock signal to the following functional unit in the row.

30. (new) A device according to claim 25 in which the functional units have a volatile memory.

5 31. (new) A method for producing a charge image on an intermediate carrier of an electrophotographic printer or copier, comprising the steps of:

 providing a character generator having a plurality of light sources arranged in at least one row in groups;

10 providing a functional unit for each light source group for control of the light sources;

 connecting the functional unit with a central control unit the functional unit comprising an address system via which it can be activated and a control unit;

15 controlling the light sources of each group by said control unit assigned to the respective functional unit;

 imaging the at least one row of light sources onto the intermediate carrier as an exposure line, and

 selecting a temporal beginning of illumination phases of at least two
20 groups of light sources such that deviations of the exposure line from a target line are reduced.